

## SKETCHES OF LINCOLN.

### His Attempt to Make a Lawyer of Himself.

#### A BOOK HIS CONSTANT COMPANION.

Why He Loved a Story—His Deficiency as a Salesman—How He Kept His Head Above the Waves of Destitution—A Surveyor Under Calhoun.

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#### VII

That Lincoln's attempt to make a lawyer of himself under adverse and unpromising circumstances excited comment is not to be wondered at. Russell Godby, an old man who still survives, told me in 1865 that he had often employed Lincoln to do farm work for him and was surprised to find him one day sitting barefooted on the summit of a wood pile and attentively reading a book. "This being an unusual thing for farmhands in that early day to do, I asked him," relates Godby, "what he was reading. 'I'm not reading,' he answered. 'I'm studying.' 'Studying what?' I inquired. 'Law, sir,' was the emphatic response. It was really too much for me as I looked at him sitting there proud as Cicero. 'Great God Almighty!' I exclaimed and passed on."

But Lincoln kept on at his studies. Wherever he was and whenever he could do so the book was brought into use. He carried it with him in his rambles through the woods and his walks to the river. When night came, he read it by the aid of any friendly light he could find. Frequently he went down to the cooper's shop and kindled a fire out of the waste material lying about, and by the light it afforded read until far into the night.

#### Preliminary Practice.

One of his companions at this time relates that "while clerking in the store or serving as postmaster he would apply himself as opportunity offered to his studies, if it was but five minutes' time; would open his book, which he always kept at hand, study it, reciting to himself; then entertain the company present or wait on a customer without apparent annoyance from the interruption. Have frequently seen him reading while walking along the streets. Occasionally he would become absorbed with his book; would stop and stand for a few moments, then walk on, or pass from one house to another, or from one crowd or squad of men to another. He was apparently seeking amusement, and with his thoughtful face and ill-fitting clothes was the last man one would have singled out for a student."

It was not long until he was able to draw up deeds, contracts, mortgages and other legal papers for his neighbors. He figured conspicuously as a pettifogger before the justice of the peace; but, regarding it merely as a kind of preliminary practice, seldom made any charge for his services. Meanwhile he was reading not only lawbooks, but natural philosophy and other scientific subjects.

It has been denied as often as charged that Lincoln narrated vulgar stories, but the truth is he loved a story, however extravagant or vulgar, if it had a good point. If it was merely a ribald recital and had no sting in the end—that is, if it exposed no weakness or pointed no moral—he had no use for it either in conversation or public speech, but if it had the necessary ingredients of mirth and moral no one could use it with more telling effect. As a mimic he was unequalled, and with his characteristic gestures he built up a reputation for story telling, although fully as many of his narratives were borrowed as original, which followed him through life. One who listened to his early stories in New Salem says: "His laugh was striking. Such awkward gestures belonged to no other man. They attracted universal attention, from the old sedate down to the schoolboy. Then in a few moments he was as calm and thoughtful as a judge on the bench and as ready to give advice on the most important matters. Fun and gravity grew on him alike."

#### A Striking Figure.

As a salesman Lincoln was lamentably deficient. He was too prone to lead off into a discussion of politics or morality, leaving some one else to finish the trade which he had undertaken. One of his employers says: "He always disliked to wait on the ladies, preferring, he said, to wait on the men and boys. I also remember he used to sleep on the store counter when they had too much company at the tavern. He wore flax and tow linen pantaloons—I thought about five inches too short in the legs—and frequently had but one suspender, no vest or coat. He wore a calico shirt, such as he had in the Black Hawk war; coarse broadens, tan color; blue yarn socks and straw hat, old style and without a band." His friend Ellis attributed his shyness in the presence of the ladies to the consciousness of his awkward appearance and the unpretentious condition of his wearing apparel. It was more than likely due to pure bashfulness. "On one occasion," continues Ellis, "while we boarded at the tavern, there came a family, consisting of an old lady, her son and three stylish daughters, from the state of Virginia, who stopped there for two or three weeks, and during their stay I do not remember Mr. Lincoln's ever appearing at the same table with them."

As a society man Lincoln was singularly deficient while he lived in New Salem and even during the remainder of his life. He never indulged in gossip about the ladies nor aided in the circulation of village scandal. For woman he had a high regard, and I can testify

that during my long acquaintance with him his conversation was free from injurious comment in individual cases—freedom from unpleasant allusions than that of most men.

While wooing that jealous-eyed mistress, the law, Lincoln was earning no money. As another has said, "He had a running board bill to pay and nothing to pay it with." By dint of sundry jobs here and there, helping Ellis in his store today, splitting rails for James Short tomorrow, he managed to keep his head above the waves. His friends were firm—no young man ever had truer or better ones—but he was of too independent a turn to appeal to them or complain of his condition. He never at any time abandoned the idea of becoming a lawyer. That was always a spirit which beckoned him on in the darkest hour of his adversity.

Some one, probably a Democrat who voted for him in the preceding fall, recommended him to John Calhoun, then surveyor of the county, as suitable material for an assistant. This office, in view of the prevailing speculation in lands and town lots, was the most important and possibly the most profitable in the county. Calhoun, the incumbent, was a Yankee and a typical gentleman. He was brave, intellectual, self-possessed and cultivated. He had been educated for the law, but never practiced much after coming to Illinois; taught school in preference. As an instructor he was the popular one of his day and age. I attended the school he taught, when I was a boy, in Springfield, and was in later years clerk of the city under his administration as mayor. Lincoln, I know, respected and admired him. After Lincoln's removal to Springfield they frequently held joint debates on political questions. At one time, I remember, they discussed the tariff question in the courthouse, using up the better part of two evenings in the contest. Calhoun was polite, affable and an honest debater, never dodging any question. This made him a formidable antagonist in argumentative controversy. I have heard Lincoln say that Calhoun gave him more trouble in his debates than Douglas ever did, because he was more captivating in his manner and a more learned man than Douglas.

But to resume. The recommendation of Lincoln's friends was sufficient to induce Calhoun to appoint him one of his deputies. At the time he received notice of his selection by Calhoun, Lincoln was out in the woods near New Salem splitting rails. A friend named Pollard Simmons, who still survives and has related the incident to me, walked out to the point where he was working with the cheering news. Lincoln, being a Whig and knowing Calhoun's pronounced Democratic tendencies, inquired if he had to sacrifice any principle in accepting the position. "If I can be perfectly free in my political action, I will take the office," he remarked, "but if my sentiments or even expression of them is to be abridged in any way I would not have it or any other office." A young man hampered by poverty as Lincoln was at this time, who had the courage to deal with public office as he did, was certainly made of unalloyed material. No wonder in after years, when he was defeated by Douglas, he could inspire his friends by the admonition not to "give up after one or one hundred defeats."

Honors were now crowding thick and fast upon him. On May 7, 1833, he was commissioned postmaster at New Salem, the first office he ever held under the federal government. The salary was proportionate to the amount of business done. Whether Lincoln solicited the appointment himself or whether it was given him without the asking I do not know, but certain it is his "administration" gave general satisfaction.

#### Nature's Stamp of Greatness.

No little of Lincoln's influence with the men of New Salem can be attributed to his extraordinary feats of strength. By an arrangement of ropes and straps, harnessed about his hips, he was enabled one day at the mill to astonish a crowd of village celebrities by lifting a box of stones weighing near 1,000 pounds. There is no fiction either, as suggested by some of his biographers, in the story that he lifted a barrel of whisky from the ground and drank from the bung, but in performing this latter almost incredible feat he did not stand erect and elevate the barrel, but squatted down and lifted it to his knees, rolling it over until his mouth came opposite the bung. His strength, kindness of manner, love of fairness and justice, his original and unique sayings, his power of mimicry, his perseverance—all made a combination rarely met with on the frontier. Nature had burned him in her holy fire and stamped him with the seal of her greatness.

In the summer of 1843 Lincoln determined to make another race for the legislature, but this time he ran distinctly as a Whig. He made, it is presumed, the usual number of speeches, but as the art of newspaper reporting had not reached the perfection it has since attained we are not favored with even the substance of his efforts on the stump. I have Lincoln's word for it that it was more of a handshaking campaign than anything else.

The election took place in August. Lincoln's friend, John T. Stuart, was also a candidate on the legislative ticket. He encouraged Lincoln's canvass in every way, even at the risk of sacrificing his own chances. But both were elected. The four successful candidates were Dawson, who received 1,390 votes, Lincoln 1,376, Carpenter 1,170 and Stuart 1,164.

At last Lincoln had been elected to the legislature and by a very flattering majority. In order, as he himself said, "to make a decent appearance in the legislature," he had to borrow money to buy suitable clothing and to maintain his new dignity. Coleman Smoot, one of his friends, advanced him "\$200, which he returned," relates the generous Smoot, "according to promise." Here we leave our rising young statesman to take up a different but very interesting period of his history.

## STRANGER THAN FICTION

### Meetings of Old Soldiers Who Thought Each Other Dead.

How Col. Mussey Found a Long-Lost Brother—The Singular and Pathetic Story of Hugh Thompson, the Nameless Soldier.

[Special Washington Letter.]

"Hello, Jack Adams! I left you dead on the field thirty years ago! Are you really alive, or are you a materialized spirit? Let me pinch you and hug you." Yes, it was really Corporal Adams, very well and very much alive. Col. Fred D. Mussey, the veteran Washington correspondent of the Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette, was sitting in his office on Newspaper row. Thousands of old soldiers were here attending the national encampment of the Grand



IN FRONT OF BATON ROUGE.

Army of the Republic. Col. Mussey had met many old friends whom he had not seen for a quarter of a century. But when Jack Adams came into the office the scene was dramatic beyond description. Col. Mussey acted like a man whose dearest brother had come back from the grave. He said:

"Why, my dear boy, I saw you killed. I saw a six-pound cannon ball cut you in two in front of Baton Rouge. We were in a charge, and I pressed on with the regiment. Other fellows were falling all around us, some of them killed, but nearly all of them wounded. We accounted for all of them, buried the dead and sent the others to hospitals. I supposed that fragments of your body were buried, for I never saw you after that cannon ball struck you."

"Yes, Fred, you are right about that cannon ball hitting me," said Adams, with a smile. "But it didn't cut me in two. As a matter of fact, it was a spent ball, and only grazed my right hip. I suppose it appeared to go clear through me. But you must remember that there was some little excitement just then, and maybe you got rattled. There was enough fighting and enough danger to rattle the bravest fellows that day. Well, the spent ball paralyzed me, and bruised me, and nearly killed me. But I was breathing, although unconscious, so they picked me up, put me in an ambulance and sent me to a field hospital. Then I was carried on to a hospital steamer, taken to a general hospital at New Orleans, and finally recovered. I never went to the front again, and it was many a day and many a month before I was sound and well again. But here I am again, in the body and mightily glad to see my old friend and comrade again."

Col. Mussey had a similar singular experience about the same time. We had desks in the same office room, and one evening he came over to see me, and, with considerable excitement: "I have discovered my brother, Al. Mussey, after nearly thirty years of silence on his part. He left our Vermont home after the war, saying he would never come back until his fortune was made. We have never heard of him since; and now I have discovered him."

"Where is he, and how did you find him?" I inquired.

"It is providential," said Col. Mussey. "The pension office sends a typewritten slip every day giving the names of Ohio and Indiana soldiers to whom pensions have been issued. I never received a California slip before, because my paper does not circulate in California. And to-night in my envelope, by an error of some clerk, I found the California pension list. I was about to throw it in the waste basket when I saw the name of Albert W. Mussey. That must be my brother. He is in California. He has applied for a pension. It has been issued, and this slip bearing his name, the only California slip I have ever seen, has been waited into my office. I will write to him."

The result of this peculiar incident was that Col. Mussey wrote to the pensioner, received a reply and then sent word to his venerable mother in Vermont that her eldest boy was still alive. Al. Mussey had become a prosperous rancher. He had been silent for many years and dreaded to write to his home, lest sad news of the deaths of his kindred might come to him. But, after all, the family was reunited, and they all look upon that stray California pension list as a providential occurrence.

More remarkable than the story of Jack Adams is a thrilling romance which the records of the pension office disclose concerning Hugh Thompson, of Van Wert, O., a farmer who had enlisted in the Fifteenth Ohio Infantry, September 1, 1862, and marched away to the front with the tens of thousands of other farmer laddies who comprised the bone and sinew of the rank and file of the armies of the union. At the battle of Chickamauga, as a comrade relates, while they were lying on the ground at the front to escape the tempest of balls that swept the thin woods where his regiment was engaged, a case shot, probably deflected from a tree, struck him in the head, and his face was instantly covered with blood. His companion spoke to him, but he did not answer. Just then the order to fall back was given. He was assisted to his feet, staggered a few feet in a dazed kind of a way, and fell in a heap as a confederate brigade swarmed into the woods, and his comrades were

forced to leave him, evidently dying from a mortal wound. He never regained him. The regimental report of the adjutant for September, 1863, bears the note opposite his name: "Wounded and missing in the battle of Chickamauga, September 19, 1863." And so he disappeared from comrades and friends and home, one of the unknown dead, remembered only as an integer component of the myriads of soldier boys who gave their young lives for their country. His father, years afterward, applied for a pension on account of his service, his mother having died prior to his enlistment. No doubt was raised as to his death in the army, but the claim was rejected on the legal ground that the father was not dependent upon the services of his lost son.

From September 19, 1863, the day of the battle, until some time in February, 1870, the history of Hugh Thompson is a blank. He recovered his identity but partially, as he was tramping through the snow on a country road near the village of Cleveland, Ill. He was a strong, able-bodied man, comfortably dressed in a good working suit, with a pair of new boots on his feet and a coon-skin cap on his head. He carried an old-fashioned oil-cloth valise, and there on the lonely road, in the darkening twilight of that freezing February evening, Hugh Thompson, the wounded soldier of Chickamauga, "came to himself," as he expressed it. It was just as if at that moment he had awakened from a dreamless sleep of seven years and become conscious of existence. Who he was, or what he had done, or where he had been, he knew not. He knew that his name was Thompson, but called himself Henry instead of Hugh. What name he had formerly used he knew not. His mind was clouded, but the clouds were lifting. Old scenes came before him as dreams. He knew he had been in the army. He knew he had been in a battle and was lying on the ground while bullets were whizzing; but everybody told him the war had long been closed. How he came to be on that country road he never knew. It was a long jump in time, from the field of Chickamauga in 1863, to the village of Cleveland in 1870.

From Illinois he went to Kansas, and, sometime in 1880 or 1881, he became impressed with the belief that he had been a soldier in an Ohio regiment. He was not sure that his name was Thompson, nor certain that he was an Ohio soldier boy. The newspapers of Kansas took up the matter, gave accurate descriptions of him, and the strange history of the Nameless Soldier, as he came to be known, traveled to Ohio and was read in the columns of the Van Wert Ga-



HUGH CAME TO HIMSELF.

zette by his aged father. The personal description tallied in a measure with that of his long-lost son, and correspondence followed. But the clouded mind of the man contained no clear vision of Van Wert. He remembered vividly the home of his boyhood and wrote an exact description of it as he had last seen it, a quarter of a century before—log house and stone chimney, the well with the long sweep to raise the bucket, the high-banked stream that ran through the farm—all still as he had left them, for changes are slow in the homes of plain people of our country. Then, with many doubts, and as many hopes, he made his way to Van Wert, in 1887, and was easily identified by his family and former comrades. He applied for a pension, and the certificate directing payment to him as the wounded and missing Hugh Thompson, of Chickamauga, was forwarded in due course of time. This is the story as revealed by the official records of the pension office. It is a wonderful story, and fiction pales before its facts.

The story of Rip Van Winkle is thrilling to an audience when the old man pulls from his leathern pouch the old contract which Friedrich Van Beekman wanted him to sign, twenty years before. It is paralleled by a part of the evidence of the identification of Hugh Thompson. From the day of his wound and loss of memory, through all his wanderings he carried a little Testament given him by a sister, with an inscription in rhyme, when he enlisted. The sister, still living, recognized it at once when he exhibited it upon his return. He had kept the Testament his sister had given him; but he had forgotten the sister. When he saw her, however, he recognized her and with a glad cry rushed to her arms, and they sobbed and cried like children. It was a reunion the like of which was never depicted upon the mimic stage.

SMITH D. FRY.

#### Immense Draught of Fish.

The biggest haul of fish ever made at the Point Sauble grounds, near Green Bay, was taken a few days ago. The single haul of the seine brought up 8,432 pounds of fish, for which the lucky fisherman received the sum of \$194.17. There were 5,870 pounds of perch, 1,825 pounds of yellow pike, 680 pounds of suckers and 77 pounds of catfish. Although the ground at Point Sauble has been seined for over thirty years, no catch equal to this has ever been made, and fishermen claim that it is a conclusive proof that the waters are not being depopulated of their fishy inhabitants, as is claimed by the enemies of seine fishing.

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

International Lesson for May 19, 1895—Jesus Before Pilate—Mark 15:1-15.

[Specially Arranged from Peloubet's Notes.] GOLDEN TEXT.—But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.—Mark 15:5. THE SECTION includes Mark 15:1-15; Matthew 27:1-30; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-40; 19:1-16. 30, the day of the crucifixion. A HARMONY is of great advantage here, for we study the whole story of the trial of Jesus as found in the combined account given by all four Gospels.

#### LESSON NOTES.

1. "The chief priests held a consultation," etc. This meeting of the Sanhedrin was for the formal ratification of the result reached in the meeting of the council described in our last lesson, which could not give a legal sentence before sunrise. "And delivered him to Pilate."

The accusation they brought was threefold, involving the charge of treason, the greatest crime known to Roman law. (1) Seditious agitation; (2) prohibition of the payment of the tribute money; and (3) the assumption of the suspicious title of "King of the Jews" (Luke 23:2)—Maclear. "Of the three points of accusation, (2) was utterly false; (1) and (3), though in a sense true, were not true in the sense intended."—A. Carr.

First, Pilate holds an interview with the Jews outside the judgment hall. About six o'clock a. m. (John 19:14, which refers to the beginning of Pilate's trial, and is according to the Roman notation, like the modern, and not the Jewish.) Jesus within the judgment hall (Luke 23:2; John 18:28-32).

Second, Pilate holds a private conference with Jesus within the praetorium. 2. "And Pilate asked him," going within the courtroom. "Art thou the king of the Jews?" as these Jews accuse you of claiming. "Thou sayest it," Jesus' answer of defense (John 18:34-38) is that He is a King, but that His "Kingdom is not of this world." Therefore it is inferred that the "perversion of the people" was not a rebellion that threatened the Roman government.

Third, a second conference of Pilate with the Jewish leaders is held, outside the judgment hall. He publicly declares the innocence of Jesus. And yet he fears to offend the Jews by releasing him. 3. "And the chief priests accused him of many things." They repeated their charges and put forth every possible argument. Jesus seems to have been brought out to the Jews to hear their accusations. 5. "But Jesus yet answered nothing." Reply would be useless to those who had determined to kill Him, no matter what He said. (See last lesson.) "So that Pilate marvelled." Matthew says "marveled greatly." How could He be calm and silent amid this storm of accusations? It was a silence only possible to an exalted nature full of self-control. At this point Pilate makes a second effort to release Jesus, his first, the declaration of His innocence, having failed with the Jews. Hearing Gallile mentioned as a part of the country where Jesus had stirred up the people, Pilate next attempts to escape from his perplexity by delivering Jesus up to Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, who was then visiting in Jerusalem. Herod questions Him at length, but Jesus refuses to say a word. Then Herod and his men of war mock His claims to be king, and array Him in royal robes, and send Him back to Pilate. So this effort of Pilate ends in failure.

6. "Now at that feast he released (was accustomed to release) unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired." The choice lay with them.

7. "There was one named Barabbas lay bound in prison, with them that had made insurrection." Matthew says he was a celebrated prisoner.

8. "And the multitude crying aloud, 'Do as he had ever done.' That is, release the prisoner they had asked. Now was Pilate's opportunity for a third effort for a release of Jesus.

9. "Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" This expression "was probably an attempt to enlist the patriotic feelings of the multitude."

10. The reason why Pilate appealed to the people directly is now given. Pilate "knew that the chief priests had delivered (Jesus) for envy," on account of His influence with the people which threatened their own power.

11. "The chief priests moved the people." The leaders caused an upheaval of opinion, appealing to the fears, prejudices and passions of the people. We learn from Matthew 27:21, John 18:40, that the people made a distinct choice of Barabbas.

12. "And Pilate answered: What wilt thou then that I shall do unto Him whom ye call the King of the Jews?" Pilate asked this question where he had no right to. He should have asked it of his conscience, of justice, of right, of truth, of honor, not of an excited mob.

13. "And they cried out again: Crucify Him!" A tumultuous shout: "To the cross! to the cross!"

14. "Why, what evil hath he done?" What excuse is there for crucifying Him? But it was all in vain. They only "cried out the more exceedingly: Crucify Him!"

The Jews insisted on the crucifixion, because they said to Pilate that by their law He was guilty of death, having claimed to be the Son of God. This alarmed Pilate, and he made still greater efforts to release Jesus. But when the Jews threatened him with the charge of treason: "If thou release this Man thou art not Caesar's friend," Pilate yielded, "willing to content the people (and) delivered Jesus to be crucified."

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Jesus was the true King of the Jews. By rejecting Him they rejected their true kingdom, and hope, and glory, to receive loss and destruction as a nation.

Jesus is our true King. To accept Him as our King is to receive a kingdom and eternal glory; to reject Him is loss and death.

There was one simple way for Pilate to escape a conflict, and that was to do his duty fearlessly. All his subtleties were of no avail. By doing wrong the very evils came upon him to escape which he had done wrong.

## GOT THE BACKACHE?

If You Have, Here's the Way to Rid Yourself of the Weariness and Pain Attending It.

Some people suffer with headaches, many people are worn out and weary all the time, many more people have lame back and backache. Few people understand the real cause of their aches, and fewer yet know how easily they can find a cure. Just a word of explanation before we prove that what we say is true. The back is the key-note of the kidneys. It aches; that's a sign that the kidneys are not working properly; it is lame; another sign, the kidneys are out of order. The kidneys, you know, are the filters of the blood, but filters sometimes get clogged up. This means in that case that the blood courses through the entire system impregnated with poisonous uric acid, bringing on many a disorder which, if neglected, means disease perhaps incurable. And now about the cure?—Don't take our word for it; read what others say:

Mr. David C. Oaks is proprietor of the well known hardware and paint shop at 229 East Main Street, Kalamazoo. Mr. Oaks has suffered a great deal from kidney ailments; he described his condition and cure as follows: "I had a bad, lame back, which I suppose was caused by my kidneys; I was confined to my bed during bad attacks. I might say, from time to time, I have been in that condition for years. The urinary organism was affected, urine being scanty, highly colored, and difficult in passage. I was in a bad shape when I got a box of Doan's Kidney Pills, about which I had heard. I have used now two boxes of them, and the pills have removed all the pain and trouble. There was a marked improvement right from the first, and it has continued right along. Doan's Kidney Pills are the right thing in the right place."

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## 500 AEROMOTORS.

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Freight 11 25 a m

Mail 11 35 a m

Fast Eastern Express 7 10 p m

Chicago & Kalamazoo Accommodation 8 35 p m

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Chicago Night Express 2 12 a m

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Mail 1 34 p m

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